

Crews on pace to complete pontoon construction next spring



Tugs tow a 360-foot-long pontoon through the Montlake Cut enroute to Lake Washington.

Seventy-seven large, concrete pontoons will support the new SR 520 floating bridge and provide stability. The largest of these – they are 360 feet long, 75 feet wide and three stories high – are built in Grays Harbor. Most of the 54 smaller pontoons – 2,500 to 2,800 tons each – are built in Tacoma.

As of December 2014:

- Seventy-four of the 77 bridge pontoons are built, and all 74 will have been towed to Lake Washington by year's end.
- Crews have begun aligning and joining the immense, longitudinal pontoons on Lake Washington, using 40 20-foot-long, 800-pound bolts to fasten each pontoon joint.

By the end of 2014, permanently aligned and joined pontoons will extend well across the lake. And by spring 2015, all 77 pontoons will be constructed.

You can view a live webcam image of pontoon construction in Aberdeen at [www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR 520/pontoons/camera](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR%20520/pontoons/camera).

The rest of the west

Funding is not yet available for constructing a six-lane SR 520 segment from I-5 to Montlake, including a new Portage Bay Bridge, a new west approach bridge for eastbound traffic, and new highway lids in Montlake and at 10th Avenue East and Delmar Drive East.

WSDOT is working with the city of Seattle and other stakeholders on design refinements for these “rest of the west” improvements, and will present their plans and updated cost estimate to the 2015 Legislature.

For more information

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SR 520 Program Website:

wsdot.wa.gov/projects/SR520Bridge



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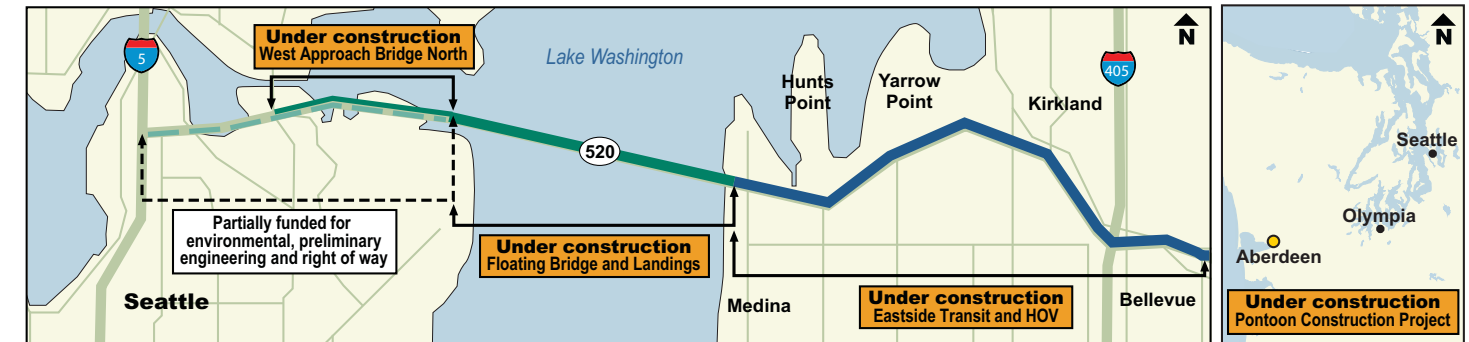
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SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Program



December 2014

Construction marches forward on SR 520



SR 520 program creates jobs

Approximately 1,300 people – engineers, ironworkers, heavy-equipment operators, welders, carpenters, electricians, concrete specialists and other skilled workers – are involved in constructing the new SR 520.

Most are working within the highway corridor itself, while hundreds of others are building key bridge and highway components in other locations: Aberdeen and Tacoma for pontoons, and Kenmore for bridge anchors and precast, concrete roadway deck sections.



Crew members assemble girder braces for the new West Connection Bridge.



The West Connection Bridge (center) was completed in September 2014.

Reaching major milestones on the road to a new SR 520

Construction is steadily moving forward to replace the world's longest floating bridge and build a safer, more reliable SR 520 between Seattle and the Eastside. The Washington State Department of Transportation and our contractors are making headway on all fronts, from nearing completion of the highway's Eastside improvements to launching the first major segment of highway work in Seattle in September 2014.

As of December 2014:

- Seventy-four of the 77 pontoons needed to support the new SR 520 floating bridge are built; the final three are under construction.
- The bridge's largest pontoons are being bolted together and anchored into place; almost half of these pontoons are now joined on Lake Washington.
- The new Eastside corridor is on track for completion by the end of 2014.
- The West Connection Bridge, an interim structure that eventually will link the new floating bridge to SR 520's existing lanes in Seattle, was completed in September 2014.
- Construction started in September 2014 on the West Approach Bridge North, which together with the new floating bridge will connect Seattle's Montlake area to the Eastside via six traffic lanes and a cross-lake bicycle and pedestrian path.



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New SR 520 floating bridge taking shape on Lake Washington

Crews are making great progress in their work to replace the structurally vulnerable, four-lane floating bridge that has served the region since 1963. The new, six-lane bridge under construction will feature wider, safer shoulders, a transit/HOV lane in each direction, a bicycle and pedestrian path, and a bridge maintenance facility under the east approach structure in Medina. Built to last at least 75 years, the new bridge will be much stronger, capable of withstanding sustained winds of up to 89 mph.

Since starting construction of the new bridge in 2012, crews have:

- Built all of the piers that will support the bridge's east and west approaches (or "high-rises").
- Built and installed on Lake Washington's floor the 58 anchors and cables that will hold the bridge's pontoons in place.
- Aligned, bolted together and anchored nearly half of the 11,000-ton pontoons that will support the new cross-lake highway's floating roadway.
- Built almost half of the 766 precast, concrete panels that will form the low-rise portion of the new bridge's roadway deck.

The new floating bridge is scheduled to open to traffic in spring 2016.

You can view live webcam images of floating bridge construction at: <http://oxblue.com/open/SR520/floatingbridge>.



Starting near the Medina shore of Lake Washington, aligned pontoons for the new floating bridge stretch far across the lake as of December 2014.

Highway construction kicks off in Seattle



Artist rendering of the West Approach Bridge North's bicycle and pedestrian path, scheduled to open in summer 2017.

SR 520 construction moved on shore in Seattle this fall when crews began building the first of two replacement bridges for the highway's seismically vulnerable west approach bridge.

Studies indicate the current west approach – a fixed, four-lane structure supported by hollow columns more than five decades old – could fail in a severe earthquake. To enhance public safety and mobility, two three-lane, solid-column approach bridges are planned for connecting SR 520's new, six-lane floating bridge with Seattle's Montlake area. WSDOT is now building the first replacement structure.

Construction started in September on the new approach for westbound traffic – the West Approach Bridge North. This bridge will include a bicycle and pedestrian path linking local and regional trails on both sides of Lake Washington. Expected to last until summer 2017, the project also will involve environmental enhancements in the Arboretum and sites along Union Bay, the Montlake Cut, Foster Island, South Lake Washington, and other locations.

Eastside transit and HOV improvements in home stretch



Commuters began using the new median transit stop on SR 520 at Evergreen Point Road in June.

The 2.5-mile stretch of SR 520 from Lake Washington's eastern shore to I-405 is undergoing substantial upgrades. Since construction began in 2011, WSDOT contractor crews have been busy:

- Building an improved, six-lane Eastside segment, with two general-purpose lanes and one transit/HOV lane in each direction, and a new, regional bicycle and pedestrian path alongside. The new HOV lanes opened in September 2014.
- Building median transit stops at Evergreen Point Road and 92nd Avenue Northeast for safer, speedier bus travel. Both stops opened to transit riders in summer 2014.
- Constructing stormwater drainage and detention facilities to capture highway runoff before it reaches Lake Washington.
- Completing lidded overpasses at Evergreen Point Road, 84th Avenue Northeast and 92nd Avenue Northeast, a wider Bellevue Way bridge and a new overpass at 108th Avenue Northeast.
- Constructing noise walls and retaining walls throughout the corridor.
- Constructing eight fish-friendly culverts – six run underneath the highway – to aid fish migration.
- Installing new pavement.



New culverts built under SR 520 are designed to aid fish migration.



Paving crews placed about 190,000 tons of asphalt, layered nearly 12 inches deep, to build SR 520's new six-lane corridor between Medina and I-405.

All Eastside improvements are scheduled for completion by the end of 2014.